

Covering Kids



As families across the nation prepare for the challenges and opportunities of another school year, many have an additional worry – how to provide the health care their children need and deserve.

This year we were all heartened by the extension of the Children’s Health Insurance Program, which promises access to health care to 4 million more of our nation’s most vulnerable children. However, the cold, hard reality remains – there are still far too many children who lack insurance and adequate access to quality health care.

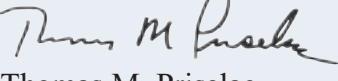
For more than a decade, the American Hospital Association and its member hospitals have teamed up with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and other national organizations to help families get their children enrolled in low-cost or no-cost health insurance plans.

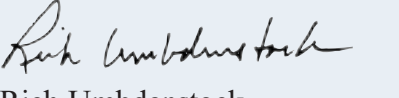
Each year, more than 200 national organizations come together for one goal – to find a way to cover the millions of children who still lack access to health insurance. Over the years, we have found that one of the best ways to expand coverage is by sharing the good ideas and innovative solutions used by our colleagues.

To that end, we are pleased to present this insert, which we hope will provide you ideas for innovative programs and events that can help you make a positive difference for a family, a child and your community. Go to www.CoverTheUninsured.org for additional ideas and summaries of programs from all over the nation.

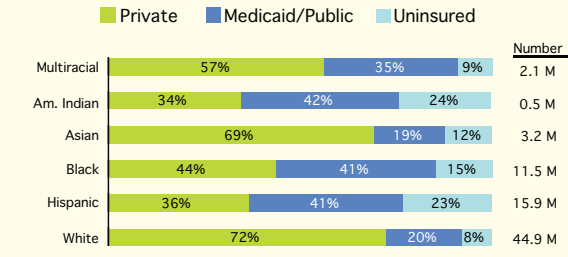
On behalf of the AHA Board of Trustees, we want to thank you for your dedication and commitment to ensuring that every child has a healthy start and a bright future. Ensuring access to health care for all children will help secure the health of our communities. There is nothing more important. We hope this year’s insert will be a useful resource to you and your team.

Sincerely,


Thomas M. Priselac
2009 Chairman
AHA Board of Trustees


Rich Umbdenstock
President and CEO
American Hospital Association

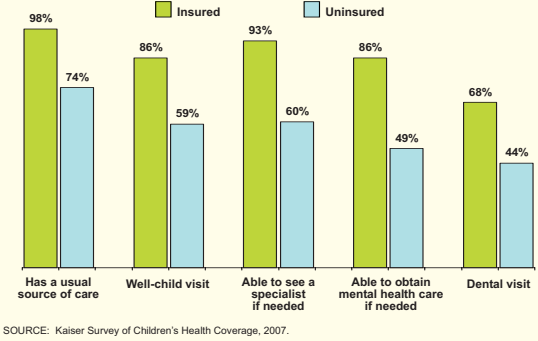
Children's Health Insurance Coverage by Race and Ethnicity, 2006



NOTES: Children includes all individuals under age 19. American Indian category includes Alaskan Eskimos. Data may not total 100% due to rounding.
SOURCE: Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured/Urban Institute analysis of March 2007 CPS.

- Initiatives to enroll the lowest-income uninsured children in coverage. The law includes new tools, such as Express Lane eligibility, to encourage the enrollment of already-eligible uninsured children in coverage, as well as an increase in federal funding for outreach. These new tools are coupled with a performance bonus system that provides states with additional federal financial help when they significantly increase their enrollment of already-eligible uninsured children in Medicaid and adopt measures to streamline enrollment and renewal in both Medicaid and CHIP.

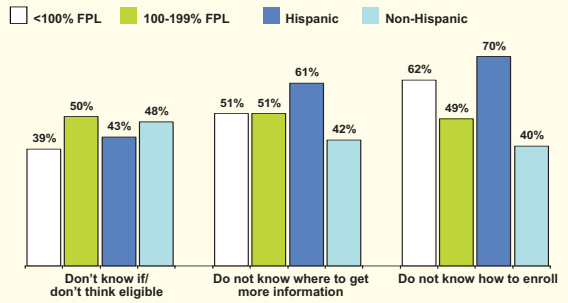
Access to Care for Low-Income Children: Insured vs. Uninsured



SOURCE: Kaiser Survey of Children's Health Coverage, 2007.

Today, nearly one in nine U.S. children lacks health insurance. These children come from every racial and ethnic background: 23% are Hispanic; 15% are black; and 12% Asian; while only 8% are white.

Knowledge Gaps Among Low-Income Parents with an Uninsured Child

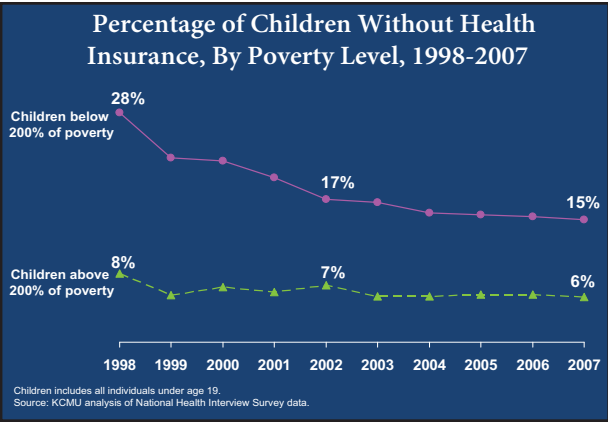


SOURCE: Kaiser Survey of Children's Health Coverage, 2007.

President Barack Obama, on February 4 as one of his first acts, signed into law the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-3), reauthorizing CHIP, which had been operating on a temporary extension that was set to expire in March 2009. At the signing ceremony, President Obama stated that with his signature, “...we fulfill one of the highest responsibilities that we have: to ensure the health and well-being of our nation’s children. It’s a responsibility that’s only grown more urgent as our economic crisis deepens.”

When CHIP began more than 10 years ago, the number of uninsured children hovered close to 12 million. Today, well over 7 million children get their health insurance through CHIP, and the number of children going without health care coverage has dropped to 8 million. Over the last 20 years, the number of uninsured has increased by one million annually; without Medicaid and CHIP those numbers would have been even higher.

The reauthorized program is expected to extend coverage to 4 million additional children through greater federal funding and several important changes, including:



Children includes all individuals under age 19.
Source: KCMJ analysis of National Health Interview Survey data.

- A state option to cover legal immigrant children and pregnant women. The new law provides states with the option to eliminate the five-year waiting period now imposed on lawfully residing immigrant children and pregnant women under Medicaid and CHIP.
- A state option to cover pregnant women. The new law establishes a new, explicit statutory option to cover pregnant women with CHIP funds.
- Dental coverage and mental health coverage parity.



HOSPITALS helping CHILDREN

CONNECTICUT MINNESOTA LOUISIANA

Introduction

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Income is a key factor in health coverage. The majority of uninsured children come from working families, with nearly 70% coming from families with incomes no higher than twice the federal poverty level, about \$42,000 for a family of four.

Studies show that uninsured children perform more poorly in school than their insured classmates and can suffer severe health consequences. They are more than twice as likely to go without care for recurring ear infections, which, if untreated, can lead to permanent hearing loss. They are 25% more likely than insured children to miss school and are four times more likely to end up in the emergency department with conditions that could have been avoided. In addition, children without insurance are between three and five times more likely than insured children to have unmet medical needs. Being without health coverage limits a child's ability to grow, thrive and engage in society in a productive way.

The good news: Nearly two-thirds of the nation's 8 million uninsured children are eligible for either Medicaid or CHIP – programs that can get them the preventative care they need and get them on the road to success in the classroom, and in life. Insurance coverage makes a difference in the health of our children, and our communities. Recent surveys, however, have shown that while low-income families favorably view public programs, there are significant gaps in awareness and understanding of available programs, particularly amongst Hispanic families.

Since CHIP's inception, the AHA has worked with hospitals, state hospital associations and other national partners to raise awareness of the problem of the uninsured and provide assistance for children and families to enroll in Medicaid and CHIP. And many hospitals and health systems have led efforts in their communities to marshal resources to provide medical services and promote enrollment in Medicaid and CHIP.

How can you help? Take a look at some of the programs hospitals have sponsored or taken part in to see what you can do to help our nation's children and families.

Project: Children's Day
Sponsor: Danbury Hospital
Location: Danbury
Partners: Branson Ultrasonics, Union Savings Bank, Trader Joe's, New Fairfield Press and other community-minded businesses

Each spring for the last 18 years, Danbury Hospital has held Children's Day, an event that seeks to promote physical activity, good nutrition and general wellness to children in a non-threatening way by creating a free, entertaining day of "hands-on" educational activities and entertainment, while at the same time introducing them to the hospital environment.

Each year, the event attracts several thousand children and their families. The 2009 event, titled "A Recipe for Fun, Food & Fitness," focused on combating childhood obesity through physical activity and good nutrition. Participants were able to learn about the importance of physical fitness while completing an obstacle course. There also were demonstrations on good nutrition that included healthy snack preparation. Tours were conducted of the Emergency and Pediatrics departments, and local fire and EMS crews demonstrated the features of their vehicles. All attending children received free giveaways including bike helmets, life jackets and other physical activity tools and toys promoting playtime as a means to a healthier life.

In addition, bilingual volunteers assisted parents with enrolling their children in HUSKY, Connecticut's CHIP program. "HUSKY enrollment can be a difficult process for those who are underinsured and, because of that, it becomes a barrier to receiving available and needed coverage. Children's Day and our efforts to facilitate HUSKY enrollment for our patients is one more way Danbury Hospital lives its mission in partnership with those we serve," stated Danbury Hospital President and CEO Frank J. Kelly.

For more information, please contact Andrea Rynn, director of public and government relations, at (203) 739-7919 or andrea.rynn@danhosp.org.



Above. Congressman Christopher Murphy (top middle), who sits on the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee, and other state and municipal leaders attended the event.



Project: Portico Healthnet
Location: Minnesota
Partners: Hospitals, health plans, corporations, foundations and the United Way

Portico Healthnet is a nonprofit health and human services organization that helps uninsured Minnesotans access affordable health care coverage and services. The program was conceived in 1995 when HealthEast Care System sought a sustainable way to provide the uninsured access to preventive and primary care so they could benefit from improved health, require less frequent hospitalization, and have a viable alternative to emergency room visits when a health issue came up.

During 2008, generous support from the United Way and local corporations and foundations enabled Portico outreach staff to screen more than 13,000 uninsured and underinsured individuals for eligibility under various health care coverage options. More than 8,000 referrals were provided to public and private health care resources, and nearly 3,800 individuals were assisted in applying for medical assistance, MinnesotaCare and other state-funded public assistance programs.



For those screened individuals ineligible for public coverage, Portico offers its own primary and preventive health care access program funded by grants and financial commitments from hospitals and health plans located in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area. Eligibility is based on annual income falling beneath 275% of the federal poverty level, and participant households pay a small sliding-scale monthly fee that goes back into paying for Portico's outreach efforts.

The Portico coverage program places special emphasis on enrolling uninsured families with children. "Children's Hospital and Clinics of Minnesota was one of the first local providers to join with HealthEast in the Portico Healthnet effort," said Deb Holmgren, executive director of Portico Healthnet. "Their leadership realized that healthy kids were more likely to emerge from families where everyone was healthy – parents and kids alike. Children's appreciated the importance of Portico's focus on the family as a whole in improving kids' health."

More than 1,400 uninsured individuals participated in Portico's coverage program during 2008. Another 600-plus individuals were on a waiting list due to the program operating at full-funded capacity. With the addition of other hospitals who joined the Portico coverage program effort this year, total coverage program participation is expected to top 2,000 by the end of 2009.

For more information on Portico Healthnet, please contact Bill Gray, communications manager, at (651) 603-5109 or bgray@porticohealthnet.org.



Project: St. Francis School-Based Health Center
Sponsor: St. Francis Medical Center
Location: Monroe
Partners: Monroe City School System; University of Louisiana at Monroe and Louisiana Region 8: Office of Public Health, Office for Addictive Disorders and Office of Mental Health

The St. Francis Medical Center School-Based Health Center seeks to bring health care to adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18 who might otherwise not have access to appropriate, timely care. It strives to promote a medical home system of care, to increase awareness of health issues and the need for positive lifestyle choices, and to assist the Monroe City Schools in creating an atmosphere in which students can learn and prosper.



Housed at Carroll Junior High School, the Center provides free primary and preventive health care, mental health services, health education and prevention programs, case management, referrals to specialty care and serves as a Louisiana Children's Health Insurance Program (LaCHIP) enrollment center. Since opening in 2007, the Center has enrolled 820 students in LaCHIP. For the 2008-2009 academic year, Center staff conducted 2,047 visits (1,425 medical and 622 behavioral health). Of these visits, 98% of students were sent back to class – keeping students in school and parents/guardians at work.

In looking at emergency department trend data, for 2007, there were 2,356 visits from the 71202 zip code for ages 12-18 years. In 2008, there was a 49.5% decrease to 1,190, and in 2009, there was an additional 9.2% decrease to 1,080, due in part to the availability of health services at the Center.

From the highly qualified medical and behavioral health staff, the enrolled students receive one-on-one and group health education. The Center takes a multi-dimensional approach by involving its community partners to assist with prevention efforts and is thankful to have this tremendous opportunity to serve Monroe City schools as they "make a difference, a positive difference, one student at a time!"

For more information, please contact Stalanda Butcher, program manager, at (318) 966-6626 or stalanda.butcher@stfran.com.



COVERING KIDS

Resources

■ Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

www.ahrq.gov/chip

Provides CHIP information on topics such as target population, outreach and enrollment, benefit design and service delivery, cost-sharing, monitoring and evaluation.

■ American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)

www.aafp.org/online/en/home/policy/state/issues/schip.html

Provides an overview of CHIP, as well as links to state and federal resources and advocacy organizations.

■ American Academy of Pediatrics

www.aap.org

Focuses on CHIP resources for the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

■ American Public Health Association (APHA)

www.apha.org

Includes a backgrounder on CHIP and examples of CHIP advocacy efforts from APHA state affiliates.

■ Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP)

www.amchp.org

Identifies the issues relevant to managed care, Medicaid, CHIP and other health service delivery networks and also monitors the impact of welfare reform on Medicaid, CHIP and maternal and child health programs.

■ Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

www.cms.hhs.gov

Provides materials on CHIP including state plans, enrollment, outreach, and regulations and allotment notices. State Medicaid toll-free phone numbers can be found at www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid.

■ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities: Start Healthy, Stay Healthy

www.cbpp.org/shsh/index.html

National outreach campaign, supported by community-based organizations, health services providers, advocacy groups, program administrators and others, which identifies eligible children and families for free or low-cost health insurance programs.

■ Community Voices: HealthCare for the Underserved

www.communityvoices.org

HealthCare for the Underserved, a multi-year initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, seeks to improve access to quality health services. Grassroots activities give uninsured and underinsured a voice to help make health access and quality part of the national debate.

■ Cover the Uninsured Week

www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org

An annual campaign sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation aimed at increasing the overall number of individuals with health coverage. The site provides information on the uninsured and suggestions for sponsoring coverage events in your community.

■ Cross Cultural Health Care Program (CCHCP)

www.xculture.org

CCHCP examines the broad cultural issues that affect the health of individuals and families in ethnic minority communities nationwide. The site has translated materials, training programs, resources and other materials to assist in outreach activities to minority populations.

■ Families USA

www.familiesusa.org

A national non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to achieving high-quality, affordable health and long-term care for all Americans. The site provides information on Medicaid and CHIP, federal health issues and specific state issues.

■ GovBenefits.Gov

www.govbenefits.gov/govbenefits/index.jhtml

GovBenefits.gov is a partnership of federal agencies with a shared vision – to provide improved, personalized access to government assistance programs. The site's online screening tool helps identify government benefit programs for which citizens may be eligible, along with information on how to apply.

■ Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

www.mchb.hrsa.gov

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau, a division of HRSA, works specifically to help women and children gain access to better, more comprehensive care.

■ Insure Kids Now!

www.insurekidsnow.gov

Insure Kids Now!, a federal campaign to link the nation's uninsured children to free and low-cost health insurance, provides state-specific eligibility information and examples of successful outreach efforts for states, community-based organizations and other interested parties. Hotline: (877) 543-7669.

■ Kaiser Family Foundation

www.kff.org

Researches and provides information on today's major health care policy issues. The Web site includes information about Medicaid and CHIP across the nation, and comparative state and national statistics.

■ National Association of State Health Policy

www.nashp.org/_catdisp_page.cfm?LID=2A78988C-5310-11D6-BCF000A0CC558925

Serves as a guide to the CHIP program; searchable by state.

■ National Association of State Medicaid Directors (NASMD)

www.nasmd.org

Serves as a focal point of communication between states and the federal government, and provides an information network among the states on issues pertinent to the Medicaid program. Also, provides up-to-date materials regarding each state's Medicaid and CHIP programs.

■ National Conference of State Legislatures

www.ncsl.org/programs/health/chiphome.htm

Comprehensive state policy Web site provides information and reports on Medicaid and CHIP, and access to more than 500,000 state documents encompassing legislative policy reports, legislation, statutes and national state surveys.

■ National Governors' Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices

www.nga.org

NGA, a bipartisan national organization of the nation's governors, and its Center for Best Practices provide reports on health insurance coverage and costs trends; state "best practices" models to increase health insurance coverage and contain costs; and other information.

■ State Coverage Initiatives

www.statecoverage.net/matrix/waivers.htm

Provides a comprehensive list of Medicaid and CHIP waivers by state.

■ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)

www.os.dhhs.gov

Provides extensive information for both children and families on health care coverage that is available. Also, the site provides information specific to each state program as well as guidelines on eligibility and other facts.



